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Letter dated 18 December 1998 from the Permanent Representative of Cyprus to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Upon instructions from my Government and further to my letter dated 16 December 1998 (A/53/761-S/1998/1189), I have the honour to draw your attention to a new violation of the national airspace of the Republic of Cyprus and of the flight information region (FIR) of Nicosia by a military aircraft of the Turkish Air Force, recorded on 16 December 1998.

On that day, one VIP C-650 military aircraft of the Turkish Air Force entered the Nicosia FIR from a south-easterly direction, violating international air traffic regulations. The aircraft in question violated the national airspace of the Republic of Cyprus, flying over the area of Karpasia and exiting thereafter towards the Ankara FIR.

As stated in my previous letters, such unauthorized intrusions into the Nicosia FIR and the national airspace of the Republic of Cyprus are in violation of international air traffic rules, and at the same time are in contravention to the provisions of Security Council resolutions on Cyprus, in which the Council states that such overflights increase tension on the island and undermine efforts towards achieving a final settlement.

On behalf of the Government of the Republic of Cyprus, I wish to strongly protest this new provocative act by Turkey against the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Republic of Cyprus. The frequency and intensity of airspace violations are a further reminder of Turkey's offensive disregard of international law, the Charter of the United Nations and all relevant decisions of the Organization on the question of Cyprus.

Furthermore, the continuing overflights by the Turkish Air Force, as well as the presence of the Turkish military occupation forces on the island, constitute the underlying causes of tension in Cyprus.

I should be grateful you would have the present letter circulated as a document of the General Assembly and of the Security Council.

(Signed) Sotos ZACKHEOS
Ambassador
Permanent Representative